Repair of National Highways in Bihar

903. SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that most of the National Highways in Bihar are in very bad shape which are damaging not only vehicles but also resulting in excess consumption of petroleum products;

(b) the total amount sanctioned and released for repairing these highways during 1997-98; and

(c) whether Government propose to release special funds on emergent basis to Bihar for repairing the roads on priority basis?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKAT-RAMAN): (a) National Highways network in the country is generally being maintained in traffic worthy condition to the extent possible within the available resources. Due to constraints of funds, it has not been possible to meet the full requirements for the National Highways including those in Bihar.

(b) An amount of Rs. 15.35 crore has so far been released during 1997-98 for repair and maintenance of National Highways in Bihar.

(c) No, Sir.

Textiles export to Hong Kong

904. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the textile export to Hong Kong is likely to be affected following the return of Hong Kong to China;

(b) if so, the steps taken to negotiate with China so that the export of textile to Hong Kong is not affected; and

(c) the projection made for the export of textile to different countries during 9th plan?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) The textile export to Hong Kong is not likely to be affected following the return of Hong Kong to China.

(c) No projection has been made for the export of textiles to different countries during the 9th plan.

Modernisation of Hand loom Development Centres

905. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to state:

(a) whether Government propose to modernise the existing Handloom Development Centres;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the other steps taken to improve the standard of life of the Handloom Weavers?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) The Handloom Development Centres are being run and managed by Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies. In order to make these Centres economically viable and efficient, Central Assistance have been provided for working capital, supply of inputs and marketing. Besides, Quality Dyeing Units have also been sanctioned alongwith some of the these Centres in order to adopt modern dying practices.

(c) The Government is implementing Welfare Schemes, namely, Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme, Group Insurance Scheme, Health Package Scheme and Thrift Fund Scheme to improve the standard of life of the Handloom Weavers.